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SOVIET MANPOWER AND PHYSICAL PRODUCTION, 1950-1960

A. Population, 1950-1960

The new Soviet handbook, Narodnoye Khozyaystvo SSSR, (The National Economy of the USSR), April 1956, provides the first official collection of data on population and manpower in the USSR since 1939. The population estimates presented in the handbook are based on registration statistics and not on census enumeration. Soviet authorities themselves have indicated problems in the compilation of registration statistics which suggest that the population figures published in the handbook may be conservative. In addition, reconstruction of population trends shows that the net population losses during the 1941-44 period (inclusive) were extremely high -- on the order of 26 million people; gross losses, including those due to declines in the birth rate and to high mortality rates, would be between 35 and 40 million people.

Pending further examination of Soviet population trends since 1939, the estimates of the population of USSR for the period 1950-1960 are based on the data in the handbook. These estimates were derived from the April 1956 population figure given in the handbook, subtracting (for the pre-1956 years) or adding (for the post 1956 years) the estimated annual natural increases. The estimates of annual natural increase for the years prior to 1956 were derived from the birth and death rates published in the handbook. (See Table 2); these rates of natural increase were then projected to 1960. An urban-rural breakdown of the total population for selected years is presented in Table 3.

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B. Labor Force, 1950-1960

The effects of the war and a lowered birth rate during the Fourth Five Year Plan (by comparison with 1940) indicate that the USSR will add fewer workers to the labor force in the Sixth Five Year Plan than in the Fifth Five Year Plan. The Sixth Five Year Plan calls for an increase of 6.6 million persons in the numbers of state workers and employees. The planned productivity goals in agriculture and other sectors of the economy will be difficult to achieve, and additional increments of labor will probably be needed to maintain the plan levels of output. It is estimated that the total labor force increment during the Sixth Five Year Plan will approach 8.8 million persons.

The estimates of the total civilian labor force presented in Table 4 were derived as the sum of: a) workers and employees; b) kolkhoz and private peasants; and c) the members of producers cooperative artels. The breakdown of this total labor force by branch of economy was derived as follows:

The agricultural labor force was estimated on the basis of pre-war (1937-38) labor requirements of agriculture. Labor inputs were calculated for individual crops and adjusted for changes in technology and institutional structure. The adjusted labor input coefficients were then applied to the 1951 estimates of agricultural production. Administrative and subsidiary agricultural workers were calculated independently and added to provide a total agricultural labor force estimate for 1951. The agricultural labor force for other years was obtained by adding estimates of net increase to the base year (1951) force.